

VZCZCXRO1852
PP RUEHGI RUEHMA RUEHROV
DE RUCNDT #0054/01 0291950
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 291950Z JAN 10
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8088
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000054

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: UNMIS ENTERS CRITICAL PHASE; COUNCIL URGES
POST-REFERENDA PLANNING

¶1. Summary: On January 26, U/SYG Le Roy briefed the Security Council on the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). Le Roy acknowledged that difficult issues still must be resolved and noted that the upcoming African Union Summit in Addis would provide an opportunity to harmonize strategies. Council members discussed security, upcoming elections, protection of civilians, preparations for the referenda, and the need for the UN to begin planning for its post-referenda presence in Sudan. End Summary.

U/SYG Le Roy on UN Priorities

¶2. Under Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy briefed the Security Council on January 26 about the critical period that lies ahead for implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Le Roy identified the key remaining issues as creating a space for credible elections, including allowing freedom of speech and assembly; reaching agreement on census results, resource and wealth-sharing; and border demarcation, including implementation of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) decision on Abyei. He noted that the AU Summit in Addis would allow the UN and the AU to harmonize their approaches to these issues. Le Roy also said that the UN was extremely concerned by the level of violence in the South and the availability of weapons, and that the mission would prioritize protection of civilians (POC).

P-5 Views

¶3. Ambassador Rice discussed escalating violence in southern Sudan, noting that increased weapons flows had been a major factor fueling this violence. She asked the UN to help determine who is responsible for these weapons inflows. Rice also acknowledged that while security is the responsibility of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS), UNMIS could do more to protect civilians. She urged the UN to assist with preparations for the referenda and to report in greater detail on these preparations in its next report. Rice encouraged the UN to begin considering how its presence in Sudan post-referendum should be defined, indicating that the Council would welcome recommendations from the Secretary-General.

¶4. Both the UK and France urged the Secretariat to begin considering reconfiguration of UNMIS post-referenda, with the UK specifically asking how the UN would interact with the African Union High Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD), led by former South African President Mbeki. Both urged the UN to appoint a strong SRSG to replace SRSG Qazi. The UK emphasized that elections must take place on time because any resulting delay to the referenda would result in renewed hostilities. France said that the number one priority for UNMIS should be POC.

¶5. Russia emphasized the important role of the AU and neighbors in CPA implementation. Regarding the future

presence of the UN in Sudan, Russia stressed that the parties to the CPA must be consulted in a timely fashion. Both Russia and China stated that increased pressure should be placed on rebel groups to engage in the Darfur political process so that an agreement could be reached prior to elections.

African Council Members Views

¶16. Both Uganda and Nigeria said that the potential for conflict in Sudan remains high. Nigeria and Gabon urged implementation of the AUPD recommendations, and Gabon expressed strong support for unity and the holistic approach of the AUPD. Uganda welcomed the joint efforts of UNMIS and MONUC to address conflict created by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) but urged more robust POC measures. Uganda also referenced as significant the statement that President Bashir made in Yambio, Western Equatoria State, concerning the National Congress Party's willingness to respect the result of the referendum if the people voted for separation.

Other Council Member Views

¶17. Lebanon praised Bashir's Yambio statement and stressed that unity must be made attractive, welcoming the efforts of the Mbeki panel to deal with Sudan holistically. Brazil, Japan, Turkey, Mexico, Austria, and Bosnia joined the broad Council consensus on the importance of POC, as well as providing a secure environment for both elections and the referenda, along with planning for the post-referenda period.

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Le Roy Response

¶18. Le Roy reassured the Council that UNMIS' first priority would be POC, and that the mission was implementing a draft POC strategy now. He said that the UN is in constant contact with the Mbeki panel, stressing that the Secretary General would attend the AU Summit with the goal of harmonizing UN and AU efforts. Le Roy stated that pin-pointing the source of weapons flows into Sudan would be difficult but undoubtedly helpful. He said that the next UNMIS report in April would take stock of the UN presence post-referenda, and that the Secretary General would name SRSG Qazi's successor within the next few days.

RICE